

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MARCIN CZEPELAK**  
**HEAD OF THE DELEGATION**  
**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND TO THE OPCW**  
THE 25<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CWC CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES  
The Hague, November 30-December 1, 2020

*Mister Chairperson,  
Director General,  
Distinguished Delegates,*

At the outset I would like to congratulate Distinguished Ambassador Jose Antonio Zabalgoitia Trejo of Mexico on taking the function as the Chairperson of the 25<sup>th</sup> Conference of States Parties. I can assure His Excellency about full engagement and support of this Delegation in the forthcoming days and weeks, including through works within the General Committee. Let me also thank the outgoing CSP Chairperson, Distinguished Ambassador of Bulgaria, His Excellency Krassimir Kostov, for His tireless efforts over the last months to guide us in these very unique and challenging circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Aligning with the EU statement, there are three specific points I would like to underline in my national capacity.

**Firstly**, comprehensive implementation of the Convention under all its pillars should remain our priority. In the current demanding situation characterized by growing political polarization and fundamental challenges for the CWC, we need to strongly support the efforts of the OPCW Director General, of the Technical Secretariat and as such – the Convention as a whole. This was the main message of the **draft resolution on the CWC implementation** that Poland, similarly to previous years, submitted to **the United Nations General Assembly in 2020**. This resolution has already a long and well established position. For years it has been making an important contribution to strengthening international peace and security and enhancing chemical non-proliferation regime based upon the Convention and its implementing body, the OPCW. The overwhelming support, expressed for the resolution in the UNGA First Committee in early November, clearly demonstrates the international community remains deeply concerned with threats and challenges related to

the use of chemical weapons, confirmed by the OPCW in recent weeks and months. It illustrates also a continuous strong support for the Organization's fundamental goals and objectives.

This leads me to **my second broad point** related to the key task ahead of us during this CSP session. From the Polish perspective it is very obvious: we need to do our utmost in order to ensure full compliance of each and every State Party with the Convention. We need to prevent and deter any further violations of the CWC.

Accordingly, it is of our utmost responsibility to adopt the draft CSP decision C-25/DEC/CRP.10 recommending actions to be taken to address **implications stemming from the first report of the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team (IIT)** on the attribution of responsibility for the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. The IIT first report's conclusions are highly worrisome and resulted in the July decision of the Executive Council. Regrettably, the Director-General's report on the implementation of the July EC decision stated that the Syrian Arab Republic had not completed any of the measures envisaged by the decision.

Equally important matter that we simply cannot ignore is yet another breach of the CWC as shown by **the recent use of toxic chemical – a military-grade nerve agent of the “Novichok” group** – as a weapon against a Russian oppositionist. By joining a dedicated statement on the poisoning of Mr. Alexey Navalny, Poland reiterates its strong condemnation of this heinous attack and stresses that those guilty of the attempted murder, with the use of prohibited chemical warfare agent, must be brought to justice. It is an absolute necessity to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation in this regard.

**Last but not least**, it is our firm belief that the Organization has to continue its efforts to effectively adapt to dynamic, unforeseen international developments, which challenge the whole multilateral system. It has been clearly underpinned this year specifically by COVID-19 pandemic, which consequences we will still experience in the months to come. Having said this Poland strongly supports presented **draft OPCW programme and budget for 2021**. It provides for an effective and balanced framework for the whole spectrum of the OPCW activities, critical to implementation of all pillars of the Convention. Furthermore, we are looking forward to creative, out-of-box and

meaningful discussions regarding possible ways of **organizing the OPCW Policy Making Organs' sessions and meetings in emergency situations**, similar to efforts undertaken by many other international organizations. These shall bring benefits both for the OPCW and all States Parties and ensure effective work in view of the requirements of the 21 century diplomacy and challenges we have to deal with.

*Thank you!*